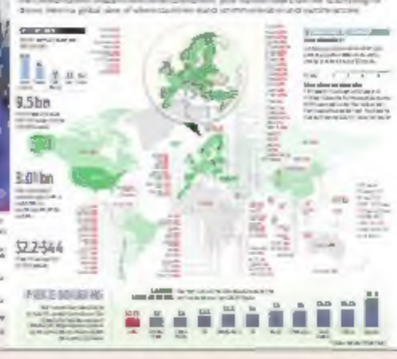
THE NEW
# INDIAN EXPRESS
BENGALURU • MONDAY • FEBRUARY 22, 2021 • ₹7.00 • PAGES 34 • LATE CITY EDITION

## JABS & JAB-NOTS



Check out our exhaustive coverage of the inequality in the global vaccine rollout, which has delayed immunisation in many poor nations

PAGE 14

## *NIGHT CURFEW BACK IN PUNE AS SECOND WAVE BUILDS UP*

**On a day Pune reported 998 cases and 9 deaths, Maharashtra CM Thackeray imposed curbs in an attempt to break the chain**

### SOCIAL, POLITICAL GATHERINGS BANNED

Thackeray prohibited political, religious and social gatherings from Monday after the state's tally crossed 6,000 for the second day. Whether the spike indicates a fresh wave will be known in 8-15 days, he said. In Pune, schools and colleges will remain closed till February 28, and hotels shall cease business after 11 pm. Violators will be slapped a ₹1 lakh fine

### NEW STRAIN FEAR IN NEIGHBOURING MP

- Fears of the new strains rose in Madhya Pradesh after 257 cases emerged on Sunday, prompting officials to send samples to Delhi & Pune. Health officials said complacency was behind the spike
- Maharashtra Chief Minister Thackeray warned the people against laxity and urged them to follow Covid-appropriate behaviour

**61**

OF SUNDAY'S 90 FATALITIES FROM MAHARASHTRA, KERALA & PUNJAB

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TRICHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

Members of the Panchamasali sect of the Lingayat community take out a rally demanding reservation, in Bengaluru on Sunday | ASHISHKRISHNA HP

## CM tasks 2 ministers with Panchamasali row firefight

ANUSHA RAVI @ Bengaluru

UNDER attack from his own community's sect, even as his political rivals make hay, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa is all set to deploy his ministers and MLAs from the Panchamasali Lingayat grouping to firefight his latest conundrum. The Panchamasali Lingayats, who are demanding reservation under 2A category, held a massive rally in Bengaluru on Sunday.

Unable to respond directly, lest it fans the embers, leading to a full revolt and damaging his image as the undisputed mass leader of the Lingayats, Yediyurappa is looking to entrust the task of tackling the precarious situation to Mines and Geology Minister Murugesh Nirani and Small Scale Industries and Information Minister C C Patil.

After the two ministers' failed attempt to woo thousands of Panchamasali Lingayats, who had gathered in Bengaluru on Sunday demanding reservation, the duo, flanked by BJP legislators from the community, will have a solidarity show with the CM through a press conference on Monday. P4

## FM defends PSU disinvestments, links it to revival of economy

Says the Budget aims to help wealth creators; terms socialism as an 'imported' concept

ANUSHA RAVI @ Bengaluru

AMID criticism over the Centre's move to disinvest in nationalised banks and several Public Sector Undertakings in the non-strategic sector, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Sunday defended the decision, insisting that it was necessary for a robust economy.

At an event organised by the economic cell of the BJP in Bengaluru, Nirmala, who was here on a two-day visit, said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had spoken to several economists, business leaders and experts before taking the decision. She refuted criticisms that the government's move was akin to "selling off the family silver."

Nirmala also stressed that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government did not believe in a socialist model, but was committed to Antyodaya. "Even from the times of Jan Sangh, we have never liked the ideology of socialism. It is an import from the USSR," she said, adding that the BJP was more focused on 'Anyodaya' and schemes like Ujjwala, Ujala, Jan Dhan, Krishi Samman were the result of this commitment.

"The PM repeats that wealth creation is not wrong. In fact, we need to honour wealth creators, otherwise where are you going to generate money for your Antyodaya? And without that stream of people honourably producing, selling, trading, exporting and paying due taxes, the money that is required for Ujjwala, for farmers, is not going to come. So, why pretend that the welfare state will be from money which will come from God knows where," she remarked.

"If the economy has to be robust, many of the PSUs will have to keep running and can't stagnate, nor can they be closed. If the government is not able to run them, and they are stagnating in the process, wouldn't it be better that they are given off to somebody who can justifiably run them?" she asked the gathering. P3,5

If the economy has to be robust, many of these units (PSUs) will have to keep running and can't stagnate, nor can they be closed.

Nirmala Sitharaman, Union Finance Minister

## We don't want to be a digital colony: Pai

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

POINTING out to the small share of Indian investments in start-ups in the country, T V Mohandas Pai, chairman of the Manipal Global Education, said only 10 per cent of the capital in start-ups now is Indian. "We do not want to be a digital colony," he said, addressing Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at a post-budget interaction organised by the Bangalore Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Bengaluru on Sunday.

"Of the 43 unicorns, 21 are outside India and have an Indian subsidiary. We do not want to be a subsidiary for an MNC outside India. Indian start-ups suffer from lack of capital and tough regulations. Capital is the biggest handicap for Indian start-ups in India," Pai stressed.

He pointed at other challenges such as overseas companies not investing in India due to regulations and seeking ease of doing business. "There are 1,200 agri-tech startups of which 300 are funded. They all ensure that farmers earn 15-20 per cent more by connecting them to the market. We want NABARD to create a fund to invest in startups so that business can go up from ₹5,000 crore to ₹40,000 crore a month in the next three years. Farmers will thus get more income," he suggested. P5

## Pondy govt set to fall as 2 more MLAs resign

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Puducherry

A day ahead of the trust vote in Puducherry, the fall of the V Narayanasamy's Congress-led government appeared imminent as two MLAs — one from Congress and another from its ally, the DMK — resigned on Sunday.

With this, the strength of the ruling front has fallen to 12, compared to the Opposition's 14. Congress MLA from the Raj Bhavan constituency, K Lakshminarayanan, who is also parliamentary secretary to the Chief Minister, said he quit as the party did not give him due recognition, causing him to feel "cheated". He is likely to join the NR Congress, which has tied up with the BJP. DMK MLA D Venkatesan, from Thattanchavady constituency, also tendered his resignation to Speaker VP Sivakozhunth, saying he couldn't serve his constituency as his hands were tied. He is likely to join the BJP. The Narayanasamy government now has the support of 12 MLAs, including the Speaker, while the Opposition's 14 include three nominated MLAs. P5

I think emotionally it was one of the hardest tournaments that I've ever had. If there was a tournament where I want to risk any more damage, and try my hardest to battle, it's here, it's a Grand Slam
Djokovic

## Super Novak

Novak Djokovic demolished Russia's Daniil Medvedev in straight sets

**7-5, 6-2, 6-2**

7,400 No. of fans at the Rod Laver Arena

**TWENTY**
Medvedev's winning streak of 20 finally broken

**9** This is Djokovic's ninth Australian Open title. He is yet to lose a final in Melbourne

**18** Djokovic is now two titles behind Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal's record of 20

We're talking about some cyborgs (the big three) of tennis, in a good way. They're just unbelievable
Medvedev

## Sonia raps govt over spiralling fuel prices, writes to PM

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Congress on Sunday intensified its attack on the Centre over the spiralling fuel prices with interim party president Sonia Gandhi writing to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, accusing his government of choosing to 'profiteer' off people's misery and urging him to follow his Raj Dharma by partially rolling back excise duty on fuel.

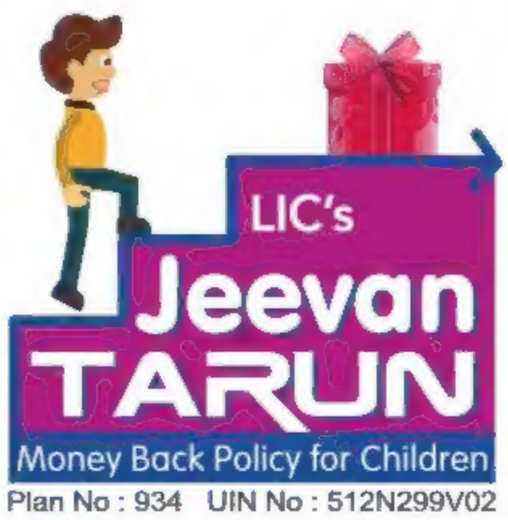
The government's act of raising prices continuously for 12 days was 'little less than a brazen act of profiteering' with fuel prices at a 'historic and unsustainable high', she said. "What baffles most citizens is that these prices have been increased despite moderate prices of international crude oil. To put it in context, the crude oil price is nearly half of what it was during the UPA government's tenure," she said.

"I fail to understand how any government can justify such thoughtless and insensitive measures directly at the cost of our people. Your government has increased excise duty on diesel by 820% and on petrol by 258% over and collected upwards of ₹21 lakh crore in the last six-and-a-half years. This unaccounted-for windfall is yet to be passed to the people for whose benefit it was ostensibly collected," she wrote. Urging the Centre to roll back the fuel price hike, Sonia said governments are elected to ease the burden of people.

Sabse Pehle Life Insurance

Have you made your child 'FUTURE READY'?

LIC's Jeevan Tarun Plan.
Securing the future of your child.



LIC's Jeevan TARUN
Money Back Policy for Children
Plan No : 934 UIN No : 512N299V02

| | SURVIVAL BENEFITS Each of 5 years from age 20 to 24 | MATURITY BENEFIT At age 25 years |
|---|---|---|
| Opt 1 | No Survival Benefit | 100 % of Sum Assured |
| Opt 2 | 5 % of Sum Assured | 75 % of Sum Assured |
| Opt 3 | 10 % of Sum Assured | 50 % of Sum Assured |
| Opt 4 | 15 % of Sum Assured | 25 % of Sum Assured |

SALIENT FEATURES
- Minimum Basic Sum Assured : ₹75,000
- Maximum Basic Sum Assured : No Limit
- Minimum Age at entry for Life Assured : 90 days (Completed)
- Maximum Age at entry for Life Assured : 12 yrs (Completed)
- Policy Term : (25 – age at entry) years
- Premium Paying Term : (20 – age at entry) years
- Option of Premium Waiver Benefit

Contact your Agent/Branch or visit our website www.licindia.in or
SMS YOUR CITY NAME to 56767474

Beware of Spurious Phone Calls/emails and fictitious/fraudulent offers.
IRDAI clarifies to public that - IRDAI or its officials do not involve in activities like sale of any kind of insurance or financial products nor invest premiums. IRDAI does not announce bonus. Public receiving such phone calls are requested to lodge a police complaint along with the details of the phone call number.

Follow us: YouTube LIC India Forever

LIC
भारतीय जीवन बीमा निगम
LIFE INSURANCE CORPORATION OF INDIA

IRDAI Regn. No. 512

Zindagi ke saath bhi, Zindagi ke baad bhi

For more details on risk factors, terms and conditions, please read the sales brochure carefully before concluding a sale.

LIC/AR/20-21/15/ENG

## BJP TO WOO FARMERS, TRIBALS AND WOMEN

MANISH ANAND @ New Delhi

WITH the Opposition breathing fire, the BJP on Sunday sought to present an effective counter ahead of a string of Assembly elections over the next three years.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi asked the party to work for organisational expansion, while the BJP leadership prioritised its focus on farmers, tribals and women as catchment areas.

Exuding confidence of winning polls in West Bengal, Assam, Puducherry and Tamil Nadu in alliance with the NDA constituents, the BJP on Sunday kept Himachal Pradesh and Karnataka, too, on the radar, where elections are still a long distance away.

CONTINUED ON: P10

WITH THIS ISSUE — THE ESSENTIAL CAMPUS DIGEST edex — 36 PAGES, INCLUDING 16 OF edex (TABLOID) AND 4 OF CITY EXPRESS

SC ORDER IGNORED

## *6 years on, Ballari's mined areas still degraded*

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

IT has been six years since Category A and B mines in Ballari district were closed and now lie defunct, but the areas covered by the mines have not yet been rejuvenated and rehabilitated despite Supreme Court orders and contract agreement.

The Indian Forest Act stipulates that once mines are closed, the mining company and other stakeholders must undertake rejuvenation of the area denuded by mining activity. However, the firms involved in mining in Ballari district have merely abandoned the mines, leaving the resultant problems unresolved.

A monitoring committee, comprising of retired Indian Forest Service officers, had made recommendations on the work to be undertaken after mining operations were closed. However, the committee too was unable to visit the areas to ascertain the present status. This has been revealed by a recent report prepared by the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE), Dehradun.

To remedy the situation, the Karnataka Forest Department has decided to take up the task itself, as the area to be revived is forest land where wildlife needs to be improved.

CONTINUED ON: P5

We do not want to have quick-growing species (of trees) which will disturb the forest species. Thus, the meeting will decide the trees to be planted

Sanjai Mohan, PCCF